

George Brown News

A newsletter for staff, faculty and alumni of George Brown College

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George Brown College School of Business Professor Lori Futterer (bottom left at front) and her winning team of marketing students show off the medals they won at 2006 Ontario Colleges' Marketing Competition, held in Ottawa on Nov. 16-17. The team won medals in five categories and placed fourth out of 16 teams from across the province after preparing in an innovative new course that Futterer created.

Innovative course teaches winning ways

It's officially called A Case Based Approach to Marketing Strategy, but this innovative new business course could be called Show me the Medals.

That's because this elective course, offered for the first time this fall, prepared students to compete in a provincial college marketing competition. And it worked—they came home victorious in November with a fistful of medals, as well as sharp new business skills.

George Brown students won a gold, three silver, and one bronze medal to finish fourth out of 16 colleges in the Ontario College Marketing Competition in Ottawa on Nov. 16 and 17. That's George Brown's best showing in more than 15 years.

The course was created and taught by Business professor Lori Futterer who has coached George Brown's student marketing team for several years. In past years students

had to fit in practice sessions after classes and weren't able to sharpen their skills quickly enough, she says.

Those skills are considerable — the contest requires student competitors to review a written case study of a business problem and then make a presentation with marketing solutions to solve it. But there's a catch — they only have half an hour to read the case, analyze the problem, develop solutions and structure a presentation. At the end of 30 minutes they make their presentation before a panel of industry judges who then drill them with questions about their strategy.

The discipline of thinking and planning quickly in the crucible of a case study is an essential skill that marketing students will use for their entire working lives, says Futterer.

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George Brown leading the pack says Environics poll

George Brown's popularity is growing, by leaps and bounds. In a recent poll on post secondary institutions in Ontario, by the research firm Environics, our college moved into the number one spot and is now considered to be the best in Ontario. And when respondents of the survey were asked which college they're planning to attend in the next five years, for the first time the most respondents chose George Brown first—with the next most popular college almost 10 per cent behind us.

All of the news out of the Environics survey is highly positive for George Brown and most results show strong gains over similar Environics polls carried out last year and in 2004. In this latest survey, GBC is ranked number one in several categories including being named by respondents as: having the highest quality teachers; providing the most innovative learning; producing graduates that will be tomorrow's leaders; and as offering the best balance between theoretical and practical learning.

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George Brown leading the pack

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Notably, respondents also marked George Brown as "the college with graduates that are most sought by employers." GBC was well ahead of the GTA college pack on this question, scoring nine per cent better than second spot holder, Sheridan and ranking more than 10 per cent higher than both Humber and Seneca.

"These results are very positive, and there is still room for even greater gains as we move forward," says Karen Thomson, vice president of Marketing. "George Brown has only just begun to position itself as the college that best equips its graduates to get the jobs they want. This is a shared vision across the college that is being delivered to our students by all staff. The great survey results, so early, can only be driven and sustained with this kind of collaborative effort."

When asked to grade GTA's colleges on quality, again George Brown came out on top with 46 per cent of respondents scoring GBC an eight, nine or 10 on a scale of one to 10; nearly 10 per cent better than second place ranked Sheridan.

The Environments poll also provides good initial news about the effectiveness of GBC's "Brown gets you the job" advertising campaign. The survey results conclude that GBC has established leadership in advertising awareness over other GTA colleges, that people linked the ads to George Brown, and that without being reminded of what the ads say, respondents recalled that the message being delivered was that attending George Brown leads to a job.

The great survey results follow equally good news about full-time student enrollment at GBC. We had the second highest enrollment increase among Ontario's 24 colleges, and the highest enrollment among the GTA's colleges. By sharp contrast, as George Brown's enrollment figures were increasing, the overall number of college students in the province was shrinking by 1.67 per cent.

The hike in the number of George Brown's full-time, post-secondary students (up by 3.81% as of the beginning of November for a total of 12,620 students) is a positive step toward the college's overall enrollment increase target of 15 per cent between 2005 and 2010.

Measured by full-time student numbers, GBC is the fifth largest college in Ontario.



NEW PROGRAM TO TRAIN WOMEN AS AIR CONDITIONING MECHANICS — George Brown President Anne Sado (right) chats with Ontario Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Sandra Pupatello (centre) and apprentice Viviana Marinacci at the official launch of a new program to train women to be air conditioning mechanics at Casa Loma on Nov. 20. The Residential Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic Training program, offered in partnership with Direct Energy Essential Home Services and Nellie's Shelter, was one of several programs that shared \$4 million in new Ontario government funding.

Talk but no action on diet, exercise – survey

Because young people talk the talk about health, but literally won't walk the walk, we need to persuade them to make healthy choices.

That's Health Science Dean Lorie Shekter-Wolfson's reaction to a college study that found 12 to 14 year-old children in Toronto know about living healthily – but won't give up daily chocolate and chips, or get up off the couch for enough exercise.

"While there's lots of talk about how important it is to lead a healthy lifestyle, students are not personally doing what it takes to get any healthier," says Shekter-Wolfson. "The survey reinforces that health promotion and prevention need to be a critical part of the health care system and that's why we're emphasizing it in our curriculum at George Brown."

Half of the 300 students surveyed rated their own overall health as poor to average. Forty per cent admitted to eating chips and chocolate every day, and the majority did not meet Health Canada's guidelines for daily physical activity. Yet, when asked what it will take for society to become healthier, the vast majority answered "eat healthier foods and exercise more."

George Brown College is working to ensure its students see health promotion and prevention as an important part of the health care system, just as is disease management, health information and oral health. By incorporating an interprofessional framework, the college emphasizes these components so that graduates will be able to work more collaboratively to significantly improve care, Shekter-Wolfson says.

Rainbow logos will mark 'positive space' in the college

George Brown will be a more accepting and colourful place early in 2007 when logos with rainbows on them start appearing in staff workspaces.

The logos will be a sign that the person who works there is open and positive to other staff, students, and the public – whatever their sexual or gender identity. It also means specifically the person has resources to help lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or queer people who may need their support.

Those resources will be made available in free, voluntary workshops at the college in which participants explore the meaning of positive space, says Glenn Walsh of Diversity, Equity & Human Rights Services, who is helping to co-ordinate George Brown's Positive Space Campaign.

"Once you finish the workshop, displaying that logo will let people know that this is definitely a space where you can be yourself, all of yourself," he says.

The three-hour workshop, offered at Casa Loma and St. James between January and March, will introduce participants to the issues, and sometimes discrimination and harassment, faced by staff and students who may not fall into what's often considered the norms of gender and sexual identity.

"We're going to give a 101 on queer issues in general and specifically issues for the college community," says Walsh.

Positive Space affects a lot of people at George Brown.

"The generally accepted statistic is that about 11 per cent of the population is homosexual – and this only includes people who are open about their sexuality. It doesn't include people who identify as bisexual, transsexual, gender queer, two-spirited and questioning. We can assume there is a sizeable portion of our community who may in some way identify as queer," he says.

The Positive Space workshop, which is being developed by professors Kathryn Payne, Maureen Hynes, and Marilyn McLean, will fill in information gaps and develop skills that people already have, as well as review terminology and look at case studies, he says.

Positive Space campaigns are underway at many public sector organizations and private companies. George Brown's campaign was envisioned by the George Brown College staff queer group, GBCQ. It's sponsored by Human Resources Executive Director Nancy Hood and supported by Dale Hall, Advisor to the President in Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Services.

For more information call Glenn Walsh at ext. 4609. To register for one of the Positive Space Workshops go the Staff Development section of the Human Resources page on inside, the college's staff intranet.



Career Services Manager Bob Eichwald (right) chats with technology students and peer tutors Kafayat Jubril (left) and Abbas Nijestani at the new Career Services Centre, which will open at Casa Loma in January. The centre will offer full-time students new ways to prepare for the job market and connect with employers.

New career centre to boost grad jobs

George Brown is rewriting the formula: students + employers = jobs. Starting early in 2007 it will be students + career services centre = more employers + more jobs.

With employers already snapping up nine out of 10 George Brown grads within six months of convocation, the college is introducing a variety of new techniques to connect even more graduates with eager employers that want to hire them.

In January the College will open the doors of a state-of-the-art Career Services Centre that will bring students and employers together using both time-honoured techniques, such as career fairs, and the latest web-based tools for job hunting.

The Centre, located at Casa Loma Campus, will be home to three full-time career advisors who will help students find their way into satisfying jobs though:

- one-on-one career counseling, including resume critiques and assistance
- Career testing and test analysis
- Workshops, interview practice, and sector-specific class visits
- On-campus career fairs and networking events
- On-line career services – including JobSpyder, which searches all on-line job sites to create a master list of job opportunities quickly and easily.

Career Services Manager Bob Eichwald says because of the rapidly changing work-force, students need to start preparing for career success soon after entering college rather than waiting for their final semester. If they understand the field they are entering, use volunteer or part-time jobs to build a resume and make contacts, assess their own strengths and practice with mock interviews, their chances of getting the job they want are much higher, he says.

That kind of focus on career preparation is more important than ever because the rate of change in the working world is accelerating and students have more choices to make.

"There are more options for our students," says Eichwald.

Kim Vance, Director of Student Support Services in Student Affairs, says her department is also exploring other ways of orienting full-time students to the job market. Counsellor Barbara Simmons is currently assessing the career support already being provided to students as part of their programs and will create the curriculum for a new elective course in career development that could be used across the college.

President Anne Sado

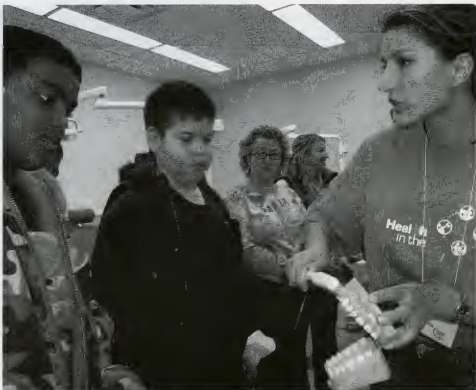
For most of us at this time of year, even as we inevitably get busier and our stress levels rise, the holiday season brings with it a certain, unmistakable and positive feeling. I had the delightful experience again this year to join the other volunteers from George Brown and the Canadian Armed Services as 1,500 holiday gift baskets were prepared for war veterans and others in need as part of the PEACE of Cake campaign. The energy among the volunteers and their families really did capture the spirit of giving.

This time of year helps remind me about how fortunate we are having the important things in our lives that bring joy and contentment—our families and friends, rewarding careers and a comfortable and safe way of life. At any time of the year, I always see the glass as 'half full,' but the holidays are a special opportunity for positive reflection and celebration.

At George Brown, we have much to be grateful for. We are fortunate to be part of an organization that believes in making the post-secondary education process as meaningful and rewarding as possible—for our students, our staff and our community. I feel privileged being able to work with so many dedicated and committed people who share in the value of education. It is a gift that I cherish.

Each of you has contributed to creating the rich experience that is George Brown. It is an experience that impacts the lives of many people in our city and province, and one that we can all feel proud of. Working together for the achievements of our students is both a huge responsibility and a great opportunity, for which I am truly thankful.

I want to wish you and your family much happiness and peace over the holidays. And I thank you for your hard work over the past year, and wish you the very best for the New Year.



HEALTH IN THE CITY – Dental Hygiene student Mira Markienicz (right) shows some middle-school students correct tooth-brushing techniques at Health in the City on Nov. 23 at Casa Loma Campus. The event, presented by the Faculty of Health Sciences, introduced Grade 7 and 8 students to ideas for healthy living and careers in health sciences through a series of display and interactive booths.

Innovative course (continued from page 1)

"The learning is in the case," she says.

The new course focuses student attention on marketing analysis, teamwork, and presentation skills – which are all integrated in preparation for the high pressure contest.

In addition to spending three hours a week in the course, the 16 competing students worked with professors Barry Wallace, Margery Taylor, Heather Stevens, Frances Steciuk, Thom Arhontoudis, and Jim Beatty, who helped hone their skills in dozens of case study practices.

Students Lisette Legare and Christina Barron won the gold medal in the entrepreneurship category with a marketing plan for a life coaching business – despite being the last presentation of a long day.

"We went in to give them some fresh ideas," says Barron, "We walked in with total confidence."

As a result of taking the course and competing, the pair are now thinking of new career directions – Legare is considering entrepreneurship, and Barron wants to be a consultant that can "fix businesses."

Student Mark Phillips came home from Ottawa with two medals – a silver in the job interview category and a silver he won with partner Rob Poulton in the marketing case study category.

Phillips says he sailed through the mock job interview and impressed judges, when he asked his potential employer what keeps the CEO of the firm awake at night.

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